



Assistive Technology

What is it?

The World Health Organization defines assistive technology as any product, device, or system that helps individuals with disabilities "maintain or improve an individual's functioning related to cognition, communication, hearing, mobility, self-care and vision, thus enabling their health, well-being, inclusion and participation". Everyone can benefit from assistive technology!

How does this look in the classroom?

Students utilizing assistive technology might use audio recorded class sessions, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, Google Chrome extensions for focus, Note-taking support apps, spell and grammar checkers, colored screen filters, and more.

Faculty should:

- Implement assistive technology tools such as embedding captions into all videos and presentations
- Provide readings in a text-based format, and allow students to use necessary technology for their learning
- Keep a clean and organized Canvas page with logical organization and clear file names
- Make sure your page is compatible for screen reader usage
- Make sure your files are text based (not a photo of the document) to allow students to process information

Common Applications

- Dictation (through Microsoft Word)
- Kindle (Text-to-Speech)
- Immersive Reader (Microsoft Word)
- Jamworks (Can record, provide transcripts and give summaries with key points)
- Smart Pens
- Natural Reader
- Notability
- OneNote
- Otter.AI

Programs to utilize

Note taking Apps

One Note

- Allows you to handwrite, type, draw, annotate documents, or get creative with their notes in other ways. It also includes accessibility features such as recording, dictation, and transcriptions.

Notability

- Paid app available on Apple products. It allows you to record audio and sync it with their notes. Notability also has a variety of creative tools for visual note taking and studying

GoodNotes

- Paid app available on desktop, android, and apple products. It offers a variety of tools for hand-writing and typing notes, as well as some creative features. On apple products it offers audio recording features.

NotebookLM

- A close AI educational tool designed to assist with research and notetaking. It can also be used to help stay organized for larger research projects.

Text-to-Speech

Natural Reader

- Will read text-based PDFs, pasted text, or webpages and can be used on the Natural Reader website, app, or Chrome extension

Read Aloud - Microsoft Edge

- Reads text-to-speech on websites or text-based PDFs opened in Edge.

Chrome Extensions

- Speechify, Pericles, and Read Aloud Chrome Reading Mode

- built in text-to-speech feature for text-based PDFs. To use it, open a PDF in Google Chrome. Right-click and select "Open in reading mode" to turn on text-to-speech

Writing Tools

Grammarly

- AI based program that provides assistance with vocabulary choice, grammar, spelling, and writing style. It can also check for plagiarism and track writing progress

Ginger

- checks for grammar and spelling, and provides personalized training based on your errors

Microsoft Dictation

- allows you to type by talking. This tool may be particularly useful for students with broken dominant hands or other difficulties typing